GT
2880
G4

Class GT 2880

Book G 4

3493

PROPERTY OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

THE ART OF DRINKING.

A HISTORICAL SKETCH.

FROM THE GERMAN OF

G. G. GERVINUS.

TRANSLATED FOR THE

UNITED STATES BREWERS' ASSOCIATION.

NEW YORK:
UNITED STATES BREWERS' ASSOCIATION.
1890.

By transfer

MAY 23 1916

GT 2880
G4

19
1320

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

G. G. Gervinus (1805–1871) is recognized as one of the foremost historians of Germany. He was a man of marvelous erudition. His fame rests not only upon a great number of profoundly learned works, but also upon his brilliant advocacy of the constitutional rights of the people, as against the reactionary tendency of the German princes during Metternich's despotic rule. He was one of the seven celebrated professors of the University of Göttingen who boldly protested against the violation of the Constitution by the King of Hanover. His best-known works are "History of the Poetical Literature of the Germans," "History of the Nineteenth Century," and a voluminous commentary on Shakspeare, "made popular in England"—as the Encyclopædia Britannica states—"by an excellent translation."

The following sketch was designed by Gervinus as an outline of what a history of potology would be, if conceived and executed by a philosophical mind.

An English translation of this sketch needs no justification in our time.

THE ART OF DRINKING.

A HISTORICAL SKETCH.

A sketch of the art of drinking might seem to announce a subject unworthy of a man whose energies have been devoted to earnest purposes and serious aims in life. But it is not my intention to make the sketch a mere treasure-box of all sorts of curiosities, nor to gratify thereby the curiosity of idle readers. When it is approached from a scientific standpoint, the dignity of science must necessarily exclude all frivolous treatment, as well as all shallow and superficial purpose. Many would be satisfied if an insignificant sketch of this kind simply bore some pathetic motto, as these words of Seneca's: *Animum aliquando debemus relaxare et quibusdam oblectamentis reficere; sed ipsa oblectamenta opera sint.* I, however, would scorn a justification of this kind, for I hold that recreation ought to be recreation, and not work, and should consider it far better if our labors were pleasures, rather than our pleasures, labors.

I wish in this sketch to point out the importance and serious significance of a work of this sort, and shall have, above all, to prove that the apparently somewhat jocular subject has a very serious side, and may be contemplated from a grave standpoint.

If I succeed from the very first in inducing the reader to adopt the same historical view of the matter that I take myself, I shall have gained a great point, for he will then lay aside all prejudice and preconceived opinion. The real historian must be a stranger to all prejudice and preconceived opinion; he cannot treat of any subject separately, but is attracted by everything in a certain order and connection. He must not choose any subject from personal inclination, but according to the needs and demands of his time and of human society; nor must he treat the chosen subject with that patho-

logical interest and sympathy so common among the writers of the New World. He must understand and know, from historical experience, that in times like ours, which have outgrown the activity of imagination—that is to say, *Art*—and, on the other hand, are not yet ripe for speculation—that is to say, *Philosophy*,—universal observation, which includes all departments of human activity, is the only thing that in these very times and for this generation can furnish positive information and prove a certain gain. The real historian, whose profession it is to be equally interested in everything, thus becomes an image of impartiality. The impartial observer is attracted by all phenomena, and to him nothing appears small, insignificant or unimportant, as soon as he begins to draw conclusions from his observations and to discover laws in the physical as well as the moral world. In the world of reason there exists nothing small, accidental or unimportant. If the same laws of chemical combination govern immense masses of matter as well as the smallest atom, if the march and development of mankind are the same as those of the most insignificant individual, the observation of the smallest as well as the greatest is of equal importance, and man may well feel comfort in the fact that each hair upon his head is, indeed, numbered. This alone might refute any serious objection to my theme.

A history of oinology or potology would be able to show that man, in satisfying a partly physical and partly intellectual desire, is bound by the same laws that govern him in the satisfaction of the highest needs of his striving mind. And if this be the case, the theme might be considered worthy of being chosen by the most severe scientific moralist; and matters of this kind are apt to be overlooked only because other things appear comparatively more important. There is a history of wine and wine-drinking (for of these alone I speak), because it is connected with our spiritual development. Wine itself shows a certain element of development and perfectibility—a relation to organic life in its fermentation, and a sympathetic feeling, as it were, in its movement during the period of the blooming of the vine, while in the plant itself it shows an inner development. I have just called wine-drink-

ing a partly physical, partly intellectual enjoyment, and it is almost impossible to call up the image of any social gathering or entertainment without it. And since all human culture proceeds from the manners and forms of society and social intercourse, we would plainly see in such a history—what has often been divined and pointed out, but also frequently smiled at—that wine is most closely connected with the civilization of States and with the development of free human culture, and that the art of drinking at all times keeps step with this culture and development, and sinks or rises with them. For not at all times have men practiced this art with equal wisdom, nor yet even practiced it in like manner; and there is spiritual progress from the blood-thirsty revels of Ægisthe to those of the philosophers with Plato; from the cup-bearer Hephæstos to Hebe and Ganymede; from the heavy, dull metal cup to the transparent, rounded crystal glass, in Lucian's time, or our own, which shows the color, retains the perfume and promotes sound. *As the culture of the grape is only found where a higher human civilization has begun to develop, it also shows itself at once where a new civilization appears; it may be even in regions unfavorable to it, where it is only cultivated till wine has become so great a want that it can no longer be dispensed with, despite the lack of sufficient native production.* The first cultivators of the vine, history praises as benefactors of mankind and propagators of civilization. Noah was the elect of God, in spite of the improprieties produced by his wine; old Dionysos, for all the ravings of his service, a kindly god; and Urban, of the Middle Ages, a saint, although he committed the greatest misdeeds under the influence of wine. And wherever, on the other hand, in more enlightened history, a man took an active part in the development of human civilization, he did so also instinctively, it would seem, for that of wine—be it a Heracles Ipoctonos among the Erythræans; or an Alexander, who, with his Greek culture, brought the grape-vine back to hot Babylon; or a Charles IV., who, with his Italian education, wished to force it upon cold Bohemia. We shall see that wherever hierarchical constitutions deprived the people of the advantages of

education, the wisdom of the priests was subtle enough to forbid wine too, and the course of the Mohammedan hierarchy will show us most plainly how the art of drinking brought with it bold reformatory deviations from the laws. We shall observe, even with Christian nations, how, among certain races where the use of wine was confined to the Communion table, civilization also came to a stand-still. We can then point to a patriarchal and heroic period of the art of drinking, where wine, as was formerly done by the Gauls, and even by our own Suabian ancestors, was despised, and afterwards, by all sorts of artificial means, made more substantial than it is by nature—more like mead or beer, which is at such periods the natural drink of the people. At an aristocratic and knightly epoch, in which society is unnaturally sublimated, it is sought to increase and make more spiritual still the effect of wine also, by the addition of spicy herbs. With the first civil development of nations they return to simple nature; a number of corporations and brotherhoods make it their business to watch over the art of drinking, over the purity of the wine itself, and its lawful use; from king to beggar, all cultivate the cheering art, just as all are anxious, also, for spiritual enlightenment. We see, then, in the last centuries the pedantic return to tea and coffee, and among those nations who have shared but in very small measure in the intellectual progress of Europe, we find that the coffee-house (café)—an institution which is scarcely a century and a half old—almost crowded out the wine-saloons.

I have alluded to wine-drinking as a partly intellectual and partly physical enjoyment. Among material enjoyments, it is one of the most spiritual; among spiritual ones, one of the most material, keeping about the right middle course. A history of the art of drinking would prove this. Everywhere in the history of nations we shall come upon times where amid a fulness of physical power, the desire for more refinement in outward life, as well as a striving for greater inner perfection, began to manifest itself. In Germany, the time of the Reformation was such a period. And at such times, when outer and inner powers begin to stir with wonder-

ful energy—times as yet divided between old roughness and new humanity; between the coarse, ordinary fare of every day for mind and imagination, and the new hope of some finer nourishment—at such times the genial enjoyment of wine, and the delights of regular social pleasures, have always struck deepest root and had freest play. Such images as those, this history would most willingly depict; nor would it be superfluous to present them in our day, when society seems more and more to forget that its aim is to be simply pleasure and recreation. The future seems to offer nothing that could take the place of the great simplicity of past manners; of those feasts of youth which asked nothing but uncontrolled enjoyment; of those evening entertainments of the citizens, which were devoted to their immediate surroundings in house or community; of the frank and manly rectitude of that race which seemed, indeed, to find truth and constancy in wine, and its best pleasures in an afternoon spent in the "wine-garden," surrounded by wife and children, relatives and friends. All public pleasure has disappeared from among us, and we arrange parties and receptions that only tire ourselves and others. Ceremonious etiquette gives us work and trouble when we should find recreation, and fatigues our minds when imagination should have free play. Only where men, here and there, permit themselves to meet about the bottle, according to the good old custom, and where no committee is necessary to approve of the toasts, pure, genuine pleasure revives once more, together with the pure, genuine art of drinking. For there is no intellectual power that is so directly quickened and strengthened by any nourishment as imagination is by wine. Tea keeps conversation within the bounds of pedantic propriety, and beer soothes but checks quick repartee; but wine sharpens the sting of wit, stimulates spirited conversation, and brightens the whole social atmosphere. The poet, who lives in imagination, and turns his back upon reality, was always a lover of wine—the beverage which intensifies reality, and, at the same time, lifts him above it. The drinking-song, from Anacreon down to all his imitators in Germany, occupies a special and very prominent place in literature. To wine are

dedicated the first productions of the tragic art; and to it has been assigned a particular dithyrambic measure, which a poet who should set water above wine could never soar high enough to make his own. And whosoever has any cause to turn away from the real world, and longs for the freedom of living in an ideal one, is fond of wine. If I wished to spoil my idyllic picture by satire, I should here name the converts and the monks; but I should rather call up the wandering beggar, whom want and hardship have made weary of the world. Sleep has been praised as the friend of poverty; but there were times when wine also was called its friend, which, even in waking hours, calls up dreams that charm away the burden of a miserable existence. For wine tempts even the beggar to extravagance, that vice which has often been set down to the account of wine; although, if there be such a thing as degrees in vice, it may be called one of the nobler ones. And this genial pleasure in spending helps the poor man in his misery; consoles him for his destitution; offers him who is homeless a spot where he may feel comfortable, and teaches him to forget all that oppresses him. Wine makes man liberal and generous; the offered cup was formerly the symbol of hospitality granted, and even the miser is more ready to share tobacco and wine than any of his other possessions. For it makes us communicative and confidential in social intercourse; it founds friendships, and is still the symbol of brotherhood. If it sometimes stirs up heat and dissension, it also smooths the way to union again; and, formerly, no reconciliation could take place without having a seal set upon it by a common cup of wine. At your cup you find the freest and most enlightened spot in the world, where you may not only think what you please, and say what you think, but where your thoughts themselves take the highest flight man is capable of. I do not know whether it is due to jealous gods that the excessive enjoyment of wine proves its own penalty. Without this depressing fire in the wine itself, it seems to me heaven and its secrets would be far more endangered by the spiritual flight of the drinker than by the towering rocks of the Titans. Thus, wherever despots and hierarchs intended

to keep nations in drowsy stupidity, they forbade wine. Only at times, when liberty and enlightenment were common property, when no castes possessed an exclusive monoply of wisdom, right or might, was it possible to introduce political discussion at the cup. For only at such times of universal public spirit and feeling could one take counsel of the imagination in practical affairs and matters of State, and hope for such results of the evening discussion at the cup as would bear the test of the sober next day's light. For only such heroic conditions as are represented by the Germans and Persians of ancient times can really show the virtues of truth and faithfulness, and in the most public concerns could hear the voice that always speaks in wine; and, in those days, no one needed to fear that wine would impel him to speak truth too freely. Only nations of really active nature, who called manliness and war-power by the name of virtue, could do full honor to wine, and it could only be a Greek who asked, as did Aristophanes:—

> "Dost thou boldly venture to say wine is not good for our reason?
> What more than wine impels us to deeds and to action?
> Why, look you, as soon as men are drinkers of wine, then
> Rich are they all and active, victorious in law-courts;
> Aye, very happy too, and to their friends useful."

Among the Germans, too, it has long been customary to settle all business with a drink, and there was no betrothal, no bargain, and no compact that was not accompanied by the purchase of wine. All German history is filled with the love of wine. When the German border-line was first drawn, the Germans insisted on keeping the left bank of the Rhine, on account of its richness in grapes. They wrote books about the national disposition to drink; they divided their history according to drinking periods, and old proverbs call the love of drink the German national vice, as theft is that of the Spaniards, deceit that of the Italians, and vanity that of the French. Nowhere exist wines so capable of purity as the German wines, and no real German will ever compare with their genuine wine-qualities those of the tricky southern wines; and nowhere have mixtures been so carefully avoided, as well as the purity of the art of drinking, and the old drink-

ing customs so scrupulously preserved, as in Germany. Only in Germany could be conceived the idea of a history of the art of drinking. Perhaps the fates have ordained me to be the historian of wine, in the very meaning of my name—ger-wîn, not gêr-wîn. And perhaps some readers may be found for it in Germany who do not consider it too indelicate to speak or to read of the natural needs of man. Let man never, in foolish pride, think himself above his own natural wishes and enjoyments, for it is the reasonable care given to these which keeps him close to human nature. As long as a people cannot live on newspaper reading and on staring about in public places, as do Frenchmen and Italians, it keeps its hands busy, its powers actively employed, and its eyes open, and wherever active powers are astir, no nation is in so very bad a condition. I should be well content if I could bring before active and manly minds a cheerful picture of those manly enjoyments, and induce them to taste of this somewhat coarser fare, in addition to the delicate dishes of our literature.

I.

The Fatherland of Wine.

I would only here and there touch upon the botanical and industrial culture of the grape, as many very valuable works on the subject already exist (among others, Henderson's "History of Ancient and Modern Wines"), which make almost a complete literature of wine. I shall also speak of the home of the grape only for the sake of preserving the natural order of things, and shall touch later upon the mythical origin of wine, or the preparation of wine. If we look for the original country of the grape, we shall find that here, too, as in almost every other branch of culture, the western highlands of Asia are pointed out to us, whether we follow the fable of Father Noah, the Nysæan Bacchus, or the researches of the naturalists. The latter teach us that on the Canary Isles and in America the grape grows not so much wild as in a degenerate condition; but in the southwest of Europe, for instance the Italian woods, it is here and there found growing really wild; that in the southeast this is still more common, and in Asia

ever on the increase. It is singular that at the Ararat, to which Jewish tradition also points, Tournefort, in his "Journey to the Levant," discovered a regular workshop of the European plant, and on the borders of transcaucasian Georgia he saw the land covered with wild grape-vines and fruit-trees. In the Caucasus, Marshall found the grape flourishing independently in the forest and covering whole trees, and we see in the rough and indifferent manner in which the inhabitants of these countries harvest and treat the grape that they consider it a very common product. The manner in which they preserve the wine, and the quantity they daily consume, prove the same, and this entirely agrees with what Xenophon tells of the preservation of the wine in cisterns. Elphinstone, in his report on Cabul, relates that the Sultan presented him with grapes that grew without cultivation in his country. And not only the quantities of the wild grapes in those countries induce us to regard them as their native soil, it is also the excellent quality of the cultivated grape in Persia. The quantity and quality of the Persian wine opposed in this respect an effective barrier to the laws of the Koran, which enjoined against the enjoyment of the beverage, even in the Orient, which is so set in its religious rites and ceremonies. Olivier preferred the grapes about Ispahan to all he had tasted in Greece, on the islands of the Mediterranean, and in Syria. None, he says, equals the *Kismish*, which bears a berry of middling size, without seeds and with a thin skin. Shiraz, rich in poets, is celebrated on account of the excellence and plenty of its wine and its fine air, and Morier, in his "Journey through Persia," places the wine of Kazwin even above that of Shiraz, and the former city is so beautifully situated in so mild a climate that the Persians have given it the name of "Paradise." In regard to the fruitfulness of the vine, Strabo tells us that in Hyrcania *one* vine was apt to yield about thirty-three quarts of wine. In Margiana were said to be vines measuring at the base of the stem two fathoms in circumference and bearing grapes two yards long. In Asia the fruitfulness is said to be still greater, and there the wine keeps, in unpitched vessels, through three generations.

II.

Wine is not Domesticated Among the Negroes.

The course from east to west, marked by the higher culture of the human race, has been also closely followed by the culture of the grape. Other regions, north and south from the boundary marked out, may have had a certain share in that civilization; but it seems now to be proved that the negro races, the original inhabitants of Africa, have not in any way been connected with it. In those regions of Africa always inhabited by these races, no grape-culture is, up to the present day, to be found; and, both in ancient and modern times, the grape has been a stranger in Africa, and a stranger scarcely to be called naturalized anywhere. To that king of the long-lived Ethiopians in Herodotus, to whom Cambyses sent his gifts, wine, therefore, seemed the only desirable thing they possessed, and to it he ascribed the brief old age which, in the best case, it was given the Persians to attain. His negroes, therefore, were not acquainted with wine, and in this they were like all uncivilized people, as we shall frequently see; nor did they ever accept it, any more than they accepted any other part of civilization; they never advanced any further than to their *Towak*, the palm-wine made of flower-stems; even the lotus-wine, of the preparation of which Herodotus knew, seems to belong only to the Libyans. Only emigrants, in the most ancient as well as most recent times, have introduced the grape-vine at different times into Africa, and we will briefly glance at this. First, the Egyptians must be named, Caucasian races not autochthonically at home in Libya. The ancient culture of the grape in Egypt is proved not only by historical documents, but even by the ruins of old buildings, and I shall return to the paintings in the vaults near El Kab, which represent, among other things, the manner of gathering the grapes, and of preserving and cooling the wine. Several regions are specially mentioned as celebrated for their wine. Eleithya had grape-culture; the lakes of Mareos and Taenia, where all is now a barren desert, were commended for their wine; Alexandria exported wine to Rome, and Horace is

acquainted with that of Mareos. To the Epicureans, however, the Falernian wine seemed better when treated in the Egyptian manner; and the wine of Taenia was considered stronger and spicier than the Alexandrian. But even in the time of Ahenæos this culture had almost disappeared, and only that of Antylla still had a good name in those days. And even in better times, the native wine does not seem to have sufficed for home consumption, for Herodotus speaks at length of imported wine from Hellas and Phœnicia. The Libyans and Berbers probably never knew a grape-culture of their own without foreign aid. It is certain that in old times the colonies of the Greeks and Carthagenians in the north of Africa were full of the grape; and we shall find further on that the cult of Bacchus was widespread in Cyrenaica, and that traces of it still remain in the ruins. Pliny speaks of vineyards as traces of ancient civilization in the mountains of Dyris (Atlas); and there are still, more for the sake of the grapes than the wine, vineyards near Tunis, in the rich district of Derna, as well as the poor one of Mafa, in Fezzan. In Mauritania, as Strabo reports, were found grapes a yard in circumference. In the oases, Belzoni saw grapes, and in that of Siwah they are excellent, as other southern fruit also. In recent times the Portuguese brought the grape, with other fruit, as well to Madeira and the Canary Isles as to Abyssinia. There the poorness of the plant itself, no less than the peculiar use of it, shows plainly what a stranger it is. Thus, also, among the Griquas it is cultivated by the missionaries only, who, confining, as they are wont, all civilization which they offer to the elements of Christian religion, give to grape-culture also only a Christian significance, planting the vine merely for its use at the Communion table. The celebrated Cape wine is a different matter. Enlightened French emigrants, Protestants driven from home by the Edict of Nantes, first planted the grape there; but it is not certain whether the vines came both from Persia and from the Rhine, or only from Shiraz. The climate seems there to favor the culture of the grape extremely; the soil, however, appears most unfavorable, and Colebrooke, in his work on the condition of the Cape of Good Hope, ascribes

the earthy taste, which makes the Cape wines unpleasant, to a substratum of the soil, otherwise rather good, consisting in many places of layers of clay and sand that has been washed up. And what is not spoiled by the soil, seems to have been spoiled by the indolence of the Dutchmen, or some other disadvantage with which the African country is cursed. A sort of fairy-tale is told of the totally wrong manner of planting the first vineyard; and still not even the example of the far better Constantia wine has induced men to make vineyards in rockier spots.

III.

The Degenerate Culture of the Grape and the Art of Drinking in China.

If the learned men of China can be trusted, the grape-vine must have been known in their country more than a thousand years B. C. They refer to this in old books, the "Tshu-ly" and the "Shi-King;" but as to the latter, that seems everywhere to refer to the wine made of various grains, which is almost exclusively used in China.

At all events, it seems to be proved by the most trustworthy witnesses that rice-wine is older in China than the wine of grapes; for while the highest age that can be assigned to wine is only given by the doubtful testimony of the supposed author of the "Tshu-ly," Tshu-Kang, who mounted the throne 1122 B. C., the invention of rice-wine is set down to the Dynasty Hia, 2209 (1716 B. C.). This also accords with experience elsewhere, for beer of various kinds (and the grain-wines of the Chinese are nothing else, except that they frequently mix them with all sorts of fruit, including grapes) everywhere became the national drink in advance of wine, as brandy and other liquors follow wine. Grape-brandy has, it appears, been known in China only since the seventh century of our era, but is now a favorite beverage with the common Chinamen, and is drunk by them warm and almost as strong as alcohol in large quantities, in spite of its very unpleasant taste. For only a comparatively short time the grape-culture

seems to have flourished in China. The Chinese always have had their grain-wines and their brandy more at heart. The inventor of the rice-wine was, it is true, banished by the Emperor Yu-te, because he well foresaw the sad consequences of its use, and yet the beverage has kept its place to the present day as an ornament of the Chinese table. It is like this people, who live on nothing but that water-plant, rice, and tea, to cling with the same obstinacy as they do to all old orders and customs, to this beverage, which is something between brandy and water, and taken neither hot nor cold. These wines are said to have a very bad effect; they fatten at first, but then bring on consumption, entire loss of appetite, and at last complete emaciation and death. It was natural, therefore, that the paternal Emperors, who looked after their subjects as after real children, and in whose laws dietetics always played a great part, should forbid these injurious beverages, and several of the Emperors set the good example. The third Emperor of the Dynasty Mant-shu, Yong-Tsheng, devoted one of his ten commandments to this subject, and the great Kanghi says in his writings that, despite his pleasure in them, he never became accustomed to wine and spirits. At feasts and banquets he only touched it with his lips, and so might well boast of not drinking any at all. Moreover, this wine consumes a great deal of grain, which in a densely peopled country, whose very existence depends upon its supplies of grain, is a matter of some importance, so that perhaps from this higher standpoint also there was good reason for the prohibition. But the most important reason lies deeper still, and was still more carefully considered; and as this chiefly concerns the wine from grapes, we must first cast another glance at grape-culture.

We have seen above that grapes existed of old in China. The just-mentioned learned, philosophical and humane Kanghi himself shows, in his remarks on natural history in China, that grapes came to China from the West, and that before his time but few kinds had existed in China, and boasts that he had sent for three new varieties to Ha-mi, as he would rather introduce a new fruit into his country than

build a hundred porcelain towers. He observes, also, that these grapes degenerate in the south, but do well in the north in dry and stony soil. The experiences of the missionaries in Pekin, however, were unfavorable; the soil was against them, as well as the remarkably rough climate, and possibly they went to work awkwardly in other respects also. For it is certain that these very southern provinces once had many grape-vines, and the wine made in Shan-si, Shen-si, Petshe-ly, Shantong, Honan and Hu-Kuang, put into well-closed vessels and buried in the ground, could be preserved for years. This goes to prove an observation we shall often find repeated, that after a time the most favorable soil no longer suffices for the grape, which demands a certain youthful power in the soil in which it is to flourish most luxuriantly. In the older and middle ages of China we therefore find the grape-wine mentioned in all their songs, and that of the river Kiang is specially praised. It is known that at different periods vines were introduced from Samarcand, Persia, Thibet, Kashgar, Turfu and Ha-mi, and the annals themselves plainly mention wine under the reign of Emperor Wu-ty, Dynasty Han, 140 B. C. From there we can follow up its use almost from reign to reign, and after the already-mentioned Kanghi, the last dynasty shows still more rulers who introduced new grapes from distant countries, so that the southern provinces begin to restore their old grape-culture again. But the grapes in Ha-mi and Shan-si seem mostly to be used for raisins, and what we occasionally hear of their condition in Hoai-lai-hien—that their berries are of gigantic size, like plums, with a thick skin, and that their size is not so much due to the climate as to the fact that the vines are grafted on mulberry-trees, and that they ripen as early as April, May and June—all this seems highly characteristic of a degenerate culture, and gives us the poorest possible opinion of the wine that might be made there. Highly, therefore, as the Jesuits attempt to praise grape-culture in China, we can yet have but little belief in it; but in the Middle Ages it must have been all the more brilliant. The reports concerning it are, however, wrapped in a certain ob-

scurity, from which no fact stands out clearly. The grape, it is said, flourished only too well in China—it caused various revolutions. As often as the Government had ordered the destruction of such trees as obstructed the grain-fields, the useless grape-vine was also included, and, if memory served the reporters, that plant was several times specially mentioned. It is certain that the destruction of the vine in most of the provinces, under various reigns, was carried so far that even the recollection of it was lost, and this induced the belief that the grape had been brought to China but recently from the Occident. It is plain that there was always a pretense put forward that the grape-wine detracted from the culture of the grain, although, with some care, the same area might probably have yielded a nobler beverage than was made of the rice and barley, grown where the grape had been rooted out. But the intellectual effect of it was evidently feared. In so regular a clock-work as the Chinese State, what might be more dangerous than irregular movements so very easily produced by wine in the heads of people? Even the making of the grape-wine was often prohibited. When that did not avail, its use was limited to feasts, banquets and sacrifices, and to guests and infirm old age. Not enough with this, at such feasts a special Mandarin was set over even the princes of the blood to keep watch over and not permit them to drink more than three glasses. And still more, certain ceremonies were prescribed, long healths and salutations, circumstantial rites, at which a free-thinker, as the Jesuits say, may laugh, but in in which a philosopher must admire the wisdom of the lawgiver, and the subtlety with which he banished intemperance, and that injudicious freedom of speech which is its inseparable companion, from among the people! We have seen the effects of grain-wine in China. The wise Emperor Kanghi complains that it makes one stupid and dull and confuses the brain. And how much more terrible still must have been the effect of the grape-wine! This is probably meant in a certain book of the Dynasty Tshu, where it is said in warning explanation of the well-founded apprehensions of the Chinese Government, that if a spirit of rebellion and insurrection was

then rife among the people of China, if they had lost much of their old virtues and principles, the cause of it must be sought solely in the effects of wine. Away, therefore, with that cursed boldness which betrays a tongue set free by wine; that noisy action and damnable confidence in one's own strength; that rising of the spirit, which must have appeared to the learned Emperor as synonymous with confusion; the impudent overstepping of the good old laws of etiquette; the wild breaking away from the good old ruts! How should not all this, which was inseparably connected with wine, seem to the philosophical head of the State in his immovable peace and calmness, and to the council of his ministerial pedants, extremely dangerous to the State, and worthy of being annihilated to the last trace? Need we be surprised, therefore, at the stories of abstinence told of the Emperors? It was their duty to give a good example to the people. Had not their prophet, Confucius, left these words of moderation—that coarse rice for food, and water for drink, and the curved arm for a pillow, were enough for happiness!

And thus the Governments of China succeeded in establishing, even in very early times, a condition of submissive decency everywhere. They confined wine to festive occasions, and we learn from the "Shi-King" that to the guest was granted the honor of the cup; even to him, however, in but the spare measure that chimes with the sordid miserliness of the Chinaman, who could never have understood the art of drinking, if for no other reason than because he has nothing of the liberality which the Orient calls the "flowing hand." They say in a guest-song:—

"A noble guest has come beneath our roof;
For him melodious tunes were played,
So long as thus it pleased our guest,
And with the cup I sought to cheer him.

"The sound of music rang incessantly,
And ever was the cup kept full;
And in our honor did he empty it;
The wine was light and pure, and harmed him not."

And in another place:—

"A hare is roasting on the spit;
A pumpkin leaf we go to pick;
A banquet we prepare our guest,
And fill his cup with wine the best."

We have seen from other authorities that wine was chiefly reserved to old age, and here it is confirmed:—

"Serve round the circle the wine-cup, ye bearers;
With the spiced wine the aged refresh them;
In it their youth and their vigor reviving,
But your own youth surely needs no concoction."

Even at the feasts where wine was permitted, its use was limited by cautious restrictions. All meals and banquets were subjected to rules of etiquette almost as rigorous as those which the Court is accustomed to give its ambassadors. The careful law is extended to the very preparation and serving of the viands, and everywhere clips the wings of the art of cooking and of drinking. If the Emperor U-tse gave his warriors a banquet to gain their favor, he still preserved the most rigid order of rank in the seating, and the food and the drink; and the Emperor Tsi-she-hoang is praised for restoring the old invitations and banquets, where every single ceremony took its due course in beginning and end, so that a modest and decent joy beamed in all eyes. To give a model for domestic feasts, they order public ceremonies in all the cities; Mandarins preside at them; the law invites scholars and distinguished citizens to them; and here, too, the rites are prescribed down to the minutest detail. The chief object of these feasts is to signalize merit, to preserve morality, and the friendly as well as conventional proprieties. The President reads aloud for that purpose, in the name of the Emperor, certain paragraphs of the law, the introduction to which specially calls to mind that the gathering is not really made for the sake of the enjoyment of meat and drink, but to revive loyalty to the Prince, and more to the same effect; and all their songs and pieces of music have reference to that. A single drinking-song, of somewhat more liberal spirit, I found in the "Shi-King," but in that the translator may possibly have had a large share, especially

in regard to the form. The contents are very characteristic of Chinese poetry in general, whose bare realism offers a remarkable contrast to that of the Orientals:—

"Water, the fresh,
Is drunk by the fish—
The carps and the pikes;
And each noble knight
At the board
Drinks water pure and bright.

"Water, the fresh,
Is drunk by the fish—
The eels and the salmon;
You sad fellows all
At the board,
Drink, till for more ye shall call.

"Water, the fresh,
Is drunk by the fish—
The perch and the barbel;
Ye good chums of mine
At the board,
Now drain ye the pearl of the wine.

"Water, the fresh,
Is drunk by the fish—
The trout and the merlin;
But we boys gay and bold
At the board
Drain waves of the wine untold."

But, even in their highest ecstasy, the brave drinkers still preserve a sort of calmness; and if there is anything that can be called a sober intoxication, this seems to be excellently expressed in the following very characteristic song:—

"Now our guests are growing tipsy;
Decency is at an end;
Sparks from out their eyes are darting,
And the babbling tongues unbend.

"Crooked caps shake back and forward,
Hung but by a single hair;
Stiff old legs the dance are trying,
Hoarse old voices sing out fair.

" At the first cup which thou drainest,
Didst thou seem transformed to me ;
If another now thou'dst empty,
Wholly tipsy wouldst thou be.

" Truly thou dost shame me sorely ;
Sober quite you see I stay ;
But if thou wilt take me homeward,
Lead me gently on the way.

" True, thou lead'st me into ditches,
But my own head reels at last.;
Hold me by thy arm supported,
By thy pig-tail hanging fast."

With this extreme point of drinking I will close. This dull intoxication is about what a warm grain-wine would produce, and fits the disagreeable character of the Chinese as well as the anecdote occurring in another song, where one whose invited guests do not appear at the right time, is actually rejoiced to think he may now drink up his wine alone. The value of wine for social enjoyment can scarcely be known there, where conventionality ties the tongues, where there is a tribunal of ceremonies, and where the tea-kettle is forever on the fire, which among us, too, fosters only embroidery, gossip and nervous debility. And then the greedy desire for physical enjoyment is the one thing which makes the Chinaman love his wine and his spicy concoctions, and which in this point has ever driven him into a never-before-heard-of opposition against his Government. How dreadful it is, however, to see these crude and childish remnants of antiquated customs most closely knit now with the most refined and elaborate tastes, wants and habits thus in vogue among the people, together with secret and most pernicious vices, and yet to find that not a single voice can be raised against it, because, with the most subtle cunning, down to the very limits of physical needs, every expression of indignation or of joy has been forbidden by law !

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
00014363634